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Review

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Sports Medicine an Emerging Field for Ayurveda

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ABSTRACT:

The ancient medical system called *Ayurveda* is one of the main systems of Alternative medicines of Indian origin. This is found very practical even in the modern era of medicines due to its unique unbeatable philosophy. We cannot observe any branch of modern system of medicines containing the explanations of sports medicines two centuries ago and obviously the same lack in the literatures of *Ayurveda*. But the field of medicine is becoming more and more interdisciplinary in nature in this modern era of medicine by incorporating the knowledge from different fields. The field of sports medicines as a separate department was developed recently in the modern medicines. Thus practitioners of *Ayurveda* also started using the term sports medicines and selected many classical time proven formulations that were found suitable for prescribing for sports injuries of the modern world. They also incorporated many formulations and methods using in different traditional schools related to martial arts and developed many modern medicaments based on them. This paper aims to explain this emerging field by citing certain such traditional formulations and modern medicaments.

Keyword: Alternative Medicines, *Ayurveda*, Sports Medicines.

INTRODUCTION

The *Ayurveda* being one of the leading systems of Alternative Medicines cannot be away from new inventions to enter into new fields. The sports Medicine is one of such fields where it has to show its power of cure and power of preventing diseases. It can also show its significances of regime that to be followed for better healthy life even in this modern era of medicines. We cannot find the field called Sports Medicine neither in the *Ayurveda* Literature nor in the Allopathic literature of two centuries ago and we cannot find a branch called Department of Sports Medicine. The *Ayurveda* is based on the ancient *Samhitas* and no were in those *Samhitas* such classes were explained. But the classical medicines explained in those basic texts can be used for treating Sports injuries also by understanding the disorders and injuries happened. The field of medicine is becoming more and more interdisciplinary in nature in this modern era of medicine. The therapeutic effects of many successful methods including medicines of various fields are incorporating to this field without any hesitations. The alternative medicines have their own importance in enriching this new emerging field with many proven medicines and regimes. The *Kalari* system has its own unique herbal formulations and treatment methods for various disorders that are common during the performances of martial arts. Many of these miracle formulations used for treating the wounded soldiers already lost and has to be rejuvenated. This could be good miracle formulations for treating sports injuries and researchers have to concentrate on this field. The practice of emergency medicines is almost lost in the field of *Ayurveda* and the rejuvenation of such medicines could also help the field of sports medicines.

Physical Exercises and Ayurveda: For a sports person the health and physical fitness are very important and for the physical fitness they are doing various physical exercises. *Ayurveda* the ancient school of alternative medicine points the importance of daily regime (both day and night) and seasonal routine for preventing the diseases and promoting the health of

the individual. Planning the daily routine of exercises by reorganizing and scheduling based on the *Ayurvedic* principles might be a better step. Many teachers of *Ayurveda* in their respective works explained the importance of *Vyayama* (exercises). The *Ayurveda* defines *vyayama* (exercises) as any physical activity which is desirable and capable of bringing about bodily stability and increases the strength of body when done in proper measure¹. It should be always performed by considering the age, habitat and food, physique and strength and must be very much designed according to the climatic changes or season. By incorporating the field of *Ayurveda* in physical exercises it can not only benefit the physical body but also the mind, senses and spirit for better results. The better determinant stress free mind with strong senses play the major role in achieving success by better performances. This we can observe by critically analyzing the performances of many well-known sports persons who perform poor during the qualifying and finals. The major reason is none other than the lack of peaceful mind and *Ayurveda* and Meditation alone can significantly improve the quality of mind and not by medications.

Significances of Ayurvedic Massage: In the ancient classical texts of *Ayurveda* there are different types of Massages mentioned according to the need. The same methodology can also be incorporated to the field of sports injuries². For example the Sanskrit term *Abhyanga* coined by two words *Abhi* (against or opposite) and *Anga* (body part or movement) is one of the main massage type thus indicating the movements in different directions. A person who wishes for positive health has to perform this massage every day for better results according to the classical texts. This *Abhyanga* massage not only promotes the health of the person but also prevents and cures the diseases. By nourishing the body it promotes clear vision, shines the skin and gives the good desired physique. Another type of upward and downward massage with various medicated oils called *Udavartana* and with dry powders *Udgharshana* alleviates vitiated *Kapha* and dissolves fat and makes the body strong and

fit. This method of massage is advisable to strengthen the calf and thigh muscles. The massage types *Mardana* downward movement of hands while squeezing the muscles after exercises and *Unmardana* (opposite to the former) are found helpful in alleviating *mamsagata vata*. Another type of massage called *Samvahanam* can increase strength by alleviating the vitiated *Vata* and *Kapha doshas* and thus takes away tiredness and fatigue. According to ancient teachers it helps in regaining the vitality in muscles. The massage with feet called *Padaghata* is helpful for making the muscles stronger and stress resistant. Apart from the mentioned there are many massage types for specific results. The medicated oils used for massaging have obviously potential therapeutic effects not only for improving fitness but also for curing injuries. By incorporating these massages used for centuries for therapeutic purposes wisely along with the modern massages can promote the health of the sports persons by healing damaged muscles, stimulating the blood circulation, releasing the stress and reducing pain and tension. It should be always performed only with the advice and supervision of qualified persons only.

Rasayana Therapy and Diet: According to certain physicians the *Rasayana* therapy has to be included in the training period itself to promote the stamina and suggest the methods like *Kutipravesha*. The *Rasayana* therapy is useful for promoting the *dhatus* of the person under training when incorporated successfully. The usage of individual personalized medication by selecting the suitable single drugs can also help to improve stamina for personal achievements. There are many special diets that can be adopted from *samhitas* for better results³. Most of these diets are mentioned for treating *Rajayakshma* for improving the various essential *dhatus* can promote the general health and stamina of the sportsmen and women.

Sports Injuries and Ayurveda: Many of the major injuries in the field of sports on thoroughly analyzing the cases are found musculoskeletal in nature. These injuries need emergency and immediate attention with good medicines of high therapeutic values. Various medicated massage oils are also found useful for treating various sports injuries with high potential therapeutic values. Many types of *Swedakarma* sudation therapy as explained in classical texts are useful for treating many sports injuries. The modern techniques can be modified and minimized the usage of Infra Red rays by adopting these techniques for better results. The various treatment methods employed in *Kalari* during the martial arts could be effectively integrated. These methods and medicines ranging from various oil formulations and massages to internal medicines. Many of those formulations for emergency during the war for treating wounded warriors were almost lost and very few are available and are traditionally practicing. Those are to be rejuvenated and applied for treating the sports injuries. The concept of *Bhagna* the fracture as explained in the classical texts has to be wisely incorporated to the field of sports medicines for treating various common fractures. The oil various formulations like *Bhagna-Sandhanaka taila* a classical oil could be used. The concept of *Agnikarma* can be effectively used for better results and more researches are going on the field of *Agnikarma* in many institutes.

Traditional Medicines: The classical medicines like *Vranaropana Tailam*, *Murivenna*, *Satahvadi tailam*, *Marma Tailam*, *Dhanwantara Tailam*, *Bala Tailam*, *Pinda Tailam*, *Narayana Tailam*, *Maharajaprasarani Tailam*, *Mahamasha Tailam*, *Ksirabala Tailam* etc. can also be effectively used for the sports injuries⁴. These are time proven medicines since from the beginning of the *Ayurveda* as evident from various classics.

Modern anti-inflammatory and muscle relaxant medicines employ various formulations containing *Diclofenac diethylamine* as the major constituent of the treating musculoskeletal injuries. This might be irritant and allergic to many people and this could be better avoided by effectively incorporating the various clinically proven herbal formulations. Among many of these classical medicines *Bala Tailam*, *Dhanwantaram Tailam*, *Maharajaprasarani Tailam*, *Mahamasha Tailam*, *Ksirabala Tailam* etc are also recommended for oral therapy in addition to the external applications. The inconveniences for handling and using these medicated oils for oral therapy and external application are nullified with the modernization of these formulae by making them soft gel capsules, creams and liniments.

Soft gel capsules: Many of the traditional medicines like *Bala Tailam*, *Dhanwantaram Tailam*, *Maharajaprasarani Tailam*, *Mahamasha Tailam*, *Ksirabala Tailam* etc. are time tested formulae and are modernized to soft gel capsule form for oral therapy⁵. These soft gel capsules are found useful for easy absorption with exact dose delivery to ensure efficacy which is very convenient to handle as modern medicines. The handling of oils in the field is not convenient and these modernized forms are very much convenient and useful as sports medicines. Many of such traditional medicines are getting converted to the modern forms keeping their traditional efficacies by various *Ayurveda* Medicine manufactures. These kinds of researches and efforts have to be appreciated and encouraged. These researches will definitely open the entry and growth of *Ayurveda* in the field of Sports medicines.

Dhanwantaram Cream: This is a modified cream form of traditional formula *Dhanwantaram* one of the time tested topical remedy to support oral therapy manufactured and marketed by Arya Vaidya Sala, Kottakkal. This is recommended for various musculoskeletal disorders like chronic low back pain, spondylosis, fibromyalgia, bursitis, muscular fatigue etc and hence found useful as a time tested sports medicine.

Dazzle Cool Cream: This is a proprietary medicine of Vasu Healthcare Pvt. Ltd., Gujarat. It contains many drugs of proven anti-inflammatory activity as supported by *Samhitas* and various clinical trials. It has clinically proven anti-inflammatory and analgesic activity as evident from the decrease in ESR, CPR and WBC values observed along with the results of hot plates and tail flick tests. The clinical studies proved that it is a promising *Ayurvedic* medicine for the treatment of acute and chronic phase inflammatory and pain conditions.

Rheumat: This is proprietary medicine manufactured by Nagarjuna Herbal Concentrates Ltd., and available both in cream and liniment forms. It is a perfect blend of traditional formulae and modern technology. The constituents are Camphor, *Mahanarayana Tailam*, *Dhanwantaram Tailam* and *Chinchodi Tailam*. All of these formulations have time proven anti-inflammatory and analgesic activity. This is also recommended for the ailments like general pain and inflammation, muscular and joint pains, sprains and lumbago. The musculoskeletal injuries are the most common sports injuries.

Rumalaya: This is a phytopharmaceutical formulation manufactured and marketed by Himalaya Drug Company for the management of pain and inflammation associated with musculoskeletal inflammatory disorders and sports injuries. It helps restore mobility of the joints with quick action and fast relief. This formulation is available as gel, liniment and tablets. This formulation is confirmed by US FDA-recommended biotech test. These formulations are highly useful for frozen shoulders,

low backache, sprains and arthritis. It is also found useful for traumatic inflammatory conditions like fibrositis, bursitis, synovitis, capsulitis, tenosynovitis, myositis, sciatica and associated sports injuries. There are many papers published on the clinical significances of these formulations.

CONCLUSION

The *Ayurveda* can be effectively incorporated in all the fields of sports beginning from training to the treatment. The curriculum of the sports training can be effectively modified by including the *Ayurvedic* concepts of healthy living by following the regime. The exercises and diet can be designed based on *Ayurveda* and *Yoga* for strong physique and mind for better performances. It can also incorporate *Rasayana* Therapy for building the required stamina according to the personalized needs and requirements. The classical and various proprietary medicines of *Ayurveda* and the applications of various less used methods like *Agnikarma* can be effectively included for better results. Many researches have to be carried out to rejuvenate the emergency medicines and therapy methods to enhance the field of sports medicines with

better *Ayurveda* medicines. The incorporation of the successful methods and medicines of alternative medicines can minimize the usage of modern medicines and hence avoid the risk of side effects for a better career and performances.

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